

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method of distributing digital information, comprising:
2 registering a digital object containing said digital information;
3 registering an access device for receiving said digital object;
4 requesting that access to said digital object be granted to said access device;
5 transmitting said digital object to said access device;
6 registering said digital object as being in use by said access device; and
7 denying further transmission of said digital object to any other access device
8 while said digital object is in use by said access device.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
2 registering a plurality of access devices for receiving said digital object, said
3 plurality of access devices having common rights of access to said digital object; and
4 wherein said step of registering said digital object as being in use by said access
5 device grants access to said digital object to all of said plurality of access devices having
6 common access rights, but to no more than one of said plurality of access devices at a time.

1 3. The method of claim 2, wherein said plurality of access devices includes
2 access devices of different types, and said digital object is transmitted to each of said types of
3 access device in a form specific to each of said types of access device.

1 4. The method of claim 2, wherein said plurality of access devices includes
2 access devices of different types, and said digital object is transmitted to each of said types of
3 access device with a content specific to each of said types of access device.

1 5. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
2 identifying said digital object with a unique identifying code, said unique
3 identifying code being contained in a physical object.

1 6. The method of claim 5, wherein said physical object includes one of the
2 group consisting of: a magnetic memory, a bar code, an optical memory and an RF tag.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of transmitting said digital
2 object to said access device includes transmitting said digital object over a computer network.

1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein said computer network includes the
2 internet.

1 9. The method of claim 5, wherein said access device is capable of reading
2 said physical object to access said unique identifying code and said step of requesting that
3 access to said digital object be granted to said access device further comprises the step of
4 reading said physical object.

1 10. The method of claim 17, further comprising the step of:

2 transferring access to said digital object from said one of said plurality of access
3 devices to a non-registered access device, not stored as one of said registry; and
4 disabling access to said digital object to said plurality of access devices stored in
5 said registry while said non-registered access device has access to said digital object.

1 11. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
2 establishing an encryption protocol for transmitting said digital information to
3 said registry of access devices;
4 encrypting said digital information in accordance with said encryption protocol;
5 transmitting said digital information to said at least one of said access devices
6 having common access rights to said digital information in encrypted form;
7 decrypting said digital information on receipt thereof by said at least one of said
8 access devices having common access rights to said digital information.

1 12. A system of distributing digital information, comprising:
2 a first registry for registering a digital object containing said digital information;
3 an access device for receiving said digital object;
4 means for requesting that access to said digital object be granted to said access
5 device;
6 a first transmitter for transmitting said digital object to said access device;
7 a controller for registering said digital object as being in use by said access
8 device; and

9 a manager for denying further transmission of said digital object to any other
10 access device while said digital object is in use by said access device.

1 13. The system of claim 12, further comprising:

2 a plurality of access devices for receiving said digital object, said plurality of
3 access devices having common rights of access to said digital object; and

4 a second registry for registering said plurality of access devices;

5 wherein said controller includes means to grant access to said digital object to
6 all of said plurality of access devices having common access rights, but to no more than one of
7 said plurality of access devices at a time.

1 14. The system of claim 12, further comprising:

2 means for identifying said digital object with a unique identifying code, said
3 means for identifying including a physical object.

1 15. The system of claim 14, wherein said physical object includes one of the
2 group consisting of a magnetic memory, a bar code, an optical memory and an RF tag.

1 16. The system of claim 14, further comprising a reader for reading said
2 physical object.

1 17. The system of claim 13, further comprising:

2 means for transferring said access to said digital object from said one of said
3 plurality of access devices to a non-registered access device, not stored as one of said registry;
4 and

5 means for disabling access to said digital object to said plurality of access
6 devices stored in said second registry while said non-registered access device has
7 access to said digital object.

1 18. The system of claim 12, further comprising:

2 means for registering a unique identifying code containing a location of said
3 digital object, said means for registering including a physical object;

4 a memory for storing a second registry of access devices for accessing said
5 digital object, each of said access devices having common access rights to said digital object, at
6 least one of said of access devices including a reader for reading said unique identifying code;
7 and

8 a second transmitter for transmitting said unique identifying code to a server on
9 which said digital object is stored, and also for transmitting said second registry of access
10 devices to said server;

11 said manager including means for comparing said unique identifying code with a
12 list of authorized codes of digital information;

13 said first transmitter including means for transmitting said digital object to at
14 least one of said access devices having common access rights to said digital object, when said
15 unique identifying code corresponds to an authorized code;

16 said manager further including means for denying access to said digital object to
17 said access devices when said unique identifying code fails to correspond to an authorized
18 digital object;

19 said controller including means for disabling further transmission of said digital
20 object to any other access devices after transmission of said digital object to said at least one of
21 said access devices; and

22 said controller further including means for re-enabling the transmission of said
23 digital object to said at least one of said access devices after receipt of a signal indicating that
24 said digital object is no longer being stored in said at least one of said access devices to which
25 it had been transmitted.

1 19. The system of claim 12, further comprising means for setting a time for
2 transmitting said digital object to said access device.

1 20. The system of claim 17, further comprising means for selecting which of
2 said access devices stored in said registry will receive said digital information.

1 21. The method of claim 17, further comprising:
2 means for encrypting said digital information before transmission thereof to said
3 registry of access devices;
4 means for transmitting said digital information to said at least one of said access
5 devices having common access rights to said digital information in encrypted form; and

7 one of said access devices having common access rights thereto.

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